NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
Monterey, California

THESIS

THE DOMESTIC STRATEGIC PLANNING ENVIRONMENT

by

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September 1984

Thesis Advisor: F. M. Teti

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T221526

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE *(When Data Entered)*

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE *(and Subtitle)* The Domestic Strategic Planning Environment		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Master's Thesis; September 1984 6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
7. AUTHOR*(s)* Stephen Joseph Walsh		8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER*(s)*
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California 93943		10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, California 93943		12. REPORT DATE September 1984 13. NUMBER OF PAGES 76
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS*(if different from Controlling Office)*		15. SECURITY CLASS. *(of this report)* UNCLASSIFIED 15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE

16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT *(of this Report)*

Approved for public release; distribution unlimited

17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT *(of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)*

18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

19. KEY WORDS *(Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)*

national interest
constraints
defense budget

20. ABSTRACT *(Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)*

This thesis examines the American environment for strategic planning and policymaking on the premise that participants in those processes should be aware of the constraints inherent in the structure of American government which work against coherence and efficiency. Against an historical background of Soviet-American competition and conflict it explores the structural and sociological constraints in American politics and their effects on foreign policy. It then investigates the concept of the

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S/N 0102-LF-014-6601

national interest as a force in foreign and domestic politics. It concludes that planning undertaken in ignorance of these structural and sociological factors will have little hope of successful implementation.

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The Domestic Strategic Planning Environment

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

from the

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
September 1984

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I. INTRODUCTION

The structure of the United States government was conceived during the eighteenth century and remains basically unchanged today. Since World War II the ability of this eighteenth century structure to respond to twentieth century political problems has increasingly been called into question. The single greatest threat to the United States is the onslaught of world communism led by the Soviet Union. Can the open, democratic government of the United States, dependent on compromise and consensus on a large scale, compete with that of the Soviet Union, where compromise and consensus have little meaning even in the Politburo?

American strategic planners need to take into account the constraints on effective policy implementation engendered by the structure and process of Madisonian democracy. Planning done in ignorance of those constraints will have little hope of successful execution.

This thesis will explore these constraints, commencing with an historical perspective of Soviet-American relations as an illustration of the danger the United States faces. This thesis will also examine the principle structural and sociological constraints on planners and policymakers and investigate of the national interest as a driving force in American politics.

II. THE SETTING

Soviet-American relations since 1917 have been characterized by fear, subdued hostility, and mutual suspicion. This competitive relationship is the fulcrum upon which international politics turns.

It is an interesting historical coincidence that in 1917 both the United States and Russia had leaders operating on powerful ideological bases.

> "There were even certain similarities in their respective points of view: both Wilson and Lenin believed in the universal applicability of their philosophies of government and in the inevitability of their eventual triumph; both sought to alter the traditional structure of international relations in such a way to end imperialism and war; both, in their way, looked to democracy as the ultimate objective. But here the similarities end. Where Lenin conceived of democracy only in economic terms, Wilson tended to think of it primarily in political terms; where Lenin endorsed violent social revolution as the only means of attaining this goal, Wilson favored evolution, or, at most, controlled revolution within a liberal-capitalist framework; where Lenin sought to overthrow the existing international order, Wilson sought to alter it from within -- to be in it but not of it."[1]

Although the ideologies are strongly divergent and antagonistic, they did not preclude some diplomatic and commercial exchange. Lenin was a realist capable of allowing short-term concessions to the capitalists to further advance the long-term prospects for successful communism. Throughout the 1920's the Soviet Union held out concessions to capitalist countries which American businessmen exploited. By 1930, 25% of Soviet imports were from the United States.[2]

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[1]Gaddis, J.L., Russia, The Soviet Union, and The United States, (New York: Wiley, 1978) p.83

[2]Ibid., p.103

Wilson was a more inflexible ideologue than Lenin, and at no point did he abandon his belief that Bolshevism was a disease requiring extermination before it engulfed Europe. The selection of means to effect this end was the only question in his mind in this regard. There existed confusion as to whether force or cooperation was the way to tame Bolshevism. (This question has remained unanswered throughout the subsequent decades.) On one hand, one can look to the American participation in the Allied interventions in Russia in 1918, on the other to the economic cooperation of the 1920's. Wilson believed that recognition of the Soviet Union would lend legitimacy to the Bolsheviks. This recognition he was not willing to give. But he and his successors were unable to come to a decision as to how to deal with the fledgling U.S.S.R. Given opportunities to harass (and possibly even strangle) the newborn Soviet Union, the United States did little to hurt her.

The United States policy towards the Soviet Union was confused for several reasons. There was little fear of Soviet power as such, but rather fear that Soviet communism (it was frequently called anarchism at the time) set a dangerous example in a war-weakened Europe. Simultaneously, the Soviet Union represented irresistable business opportunities for American industry. Lenin welcomed American business and knew the capitalist would be unable to resist the short-term payoffs, regardless of long-term perils. Additionally, America separated diplomatic and economic relations in a way they never were separated in the Soviet Union. Throughout the 1920's, the United States was unable to align its ideological aims with its business interests and economic policies.[3]

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[3]Ibid., p. 104-105

The Soviet government suffered from a similar schizophrenia during this period, which compounded American confusion. The U.S.S.R. had two conflicting and competing interests. On one hand Russia required a period of peace and stability (internal and international) to repair the tremendous damage done by World War I and to solidify the new regime in power. This required the establishment of cordial business relationships with the West, for Western capital, technical expertise, and finished goods were badly needed. Marxism demanded industrialization, and this was a tall order in Soviet Russia, even without the destruction of World War I.

On the other hand international stability did nothing to further the prospects of the world revolution. War was necessary to destabilize the existing world order, pit the capitalists/imperialists against each other, and generally create opportunties for communism to rise up and establish the new world order. Thus the activities of the Comintern were crucial to ideolgical cohesion when faced with conflicting interests. The mission of the Comintern was very clear:

> "The destruction by war of capitalist equilibrium throughout the world creates favorable fighting conditions for the forces of social revolution. All the efforts of the Communist International were and are designed to exploit this situation to the full."[4]

The existence and activity of the Comintern was a fundamental bone of contention between the United States and the Soviet Union in the post World War I period and probably the largest single barrier to the establishment of diplomatic relations.

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[4]Degras, J., ed., The Communist International, 1919-1943: Documents, I:1919-22 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 238.

In spite of this, two factors brought a warming in this relationship. One was the growing power of Germany and Japan. The other was the accession of Franklin D. Roosevelt to the presidency in January 1933. Roosevelt favored the establishment of diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. for a practical reason: non-recognition had not accomplished any purpose. The Soviets were clearly in charge of Russia and it was necessary to deal with them, especially anticipating problems with Germany and Japan. In November, Soviet Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov came to Washington and, after brief negotiations, diplomatic relations between The United States of America and The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics were established on 17 November, 1933.[5]

One of the primary pre-conditions of recognition laid down by Roosevelt was a Soviet pledge of non-intervention in United States domestic affairs. This was easy for the Soviets to agree to, because they always held (publicly) that the Comintern was independent of Soviet government influence. Within two years, the facade of friendly relations had disappeared.[6] It evaporated because of misunderstandings (on the American side) regarding the wording of the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreements and because of a growing realization in the United States of the realities of the Stalin regime. The Soviet constitution of 1936, ostensibly guaranteeing the rights of Soviet citizens, went into effect four months after the first great purge trial. As the scope of the purges became known in the West, the divergence between Soviet rhetoric and the reality of Soviet behavior increasingly poisoned relations between the two countries.

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[5]Ulam, A., Expansion and Coexistence, (New York: Praeger, 1973) p.211

[6]Russia, The Soviet Union, and the United States, p.122-130

Roosevelt continued to work for cooperation with the Soviets throughout the thirties, however. Whatever his personal feeling about Soviet communism, he considered Germany and Japan to be the paramount danger. The bombing of the USS Panay in December 1937 fueled his desire to form an anti-Japanese coalition in the Pacific. The Munich agreement of 1938 surrendering the Sudetenland to Germany had similar effect on his thinking vis-a-vis the Germans. For these reasons the Soviet-Nazi Pact of August 1939, their joint assault on Poland in September 1939, and the Russian invasion of Finland in November 1939 were a blow to his hopes of joining with the Soviet Union in containing the greater menaces of Germany and Japan.

Adolf Hitler was to be the agent of improved Soviet-American relations. Between June and December 1941, he accomplished the astonishing feat of declaring war on both the United States and the Soviet Union. The "Grand Alliance" was forged against the (finally) common German foe.

This unlikely coalition did little to ease the tension inherent in the Soviet-American relationship. Even before the war was won, there was significant bickering among the Allies. The chief point of argument concerned the opening of a second front in Europe. Stalin then, and Soviet Leaders since, maintained that Great Britain and the United States deliberately delayed opening a second front, ostensibly with the motive of allowing Germany and the U.S.S.R to exhaust themselves, creating an opportunity for Great Britain and the United States to step in and establish the post-war international structure. The Soviets perhaps had some reason for this feeling. Indeed, for every one American killed fighting the Germans, fifty Russians died.[7]

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[7]Feitzell, R., The Uneasy Alliance: America, Britain, and Russia, 1941-1943, (New York: Praeger, 1972) p. 369

The Soviet charges had some validity, but ignored the realities of British and American military capabilities at the time (1942-43). And in fact there was a second front which heavily engaged British and American resources: The Pacific Theater. The Pacific war undoubtedly relieved Soviet defense concerns on their eastern frontier, albeit this was little consolation with the Germans assaulting Moscow and Leningrad. The Western allies had the option of selecting when and where to open the second front in Europe and the policy arrived at (defeating German forces in Africa first, moving into Italy, and finally to Normandy) reflects realistic choices made between ends and means.

> "Anglo-American strategy reflected the rational balancing of objectives and resources which any wise statesman will engage in, if he has the choice. Stalin, in part as a result of his own bungling diplomacy between 1939 and 1941, was simply unfortunate enough not to have had that choice."[8]

The Grand Alliance collapsed rapidly following victory. It had served its function, and without a common enemy the coalition of such divergent societies could not be sustained. Additionaly, the players had changed. Roosevelt had died and Churchill had been replaced by Clement Attlee; the alliance could not survive the passing of two of its three founders. There was also a fundamental change in the world which posed a real threat to Soviet interests.

> "The end of the war marked the beginning of a veritable world-wide revolution, the essence of which was the eventual victory of the American style over older civilizations and ways of life. It was not only a matter of refrigerators or automobiles or that disregard of customs and traditions which resentful Frenchmen dubbed coca-colonization, but the whole individualist and secularist thrust of American culture."[9]

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[8] Russia, The Soviet Union, and The United States, p.155

[9] Ulam, A., The Rivals: America and Russia since World War II, (New York: Viking, 1971) p. 111

This cultural onslaught (probably no one in America realized it was ongoing) was and is really more dangerous to the U.S.S.R. than American military power. The military threat by each country to the other derives from a fundamental social conflict. When given the opportunity, people will choose freedom over totalitarianism. This is an intolerable menace to the Soviets. Their tangible response to this problem became known as the Iron Curtain.

Stalin quickly consolidated Soviet holdings in Eastern Europe and along the Baltic coast. He also carefully eliminated Western influence as much as possible in the area and pursued Soviet hegemony there. In February, 1947, Stalin agreed to peace treaties with Italy, Finland, Hungary, and Romania, then promptly proceeded to ignore the democratic safeguards provisioned therein. The treaties legalized most of the Soviet Union's territorial holdings to date: Finnish territory extending the Soviet border to Norway, seventy thousand square miles of Polish soil, the Czechoslovakian province of Ruthenia, and Bukovina and Bessarabia from Romania. Combined with Moscow's annexation of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia (never recognized by the United States), and East Prussia, the U.S.S.R. assumed complete control of the eastern Baltic Sea and established a common border with every country in Eastern Europe, facilitating military and political control.[10]

Stalin's policy of expansion had been successful for the most part. He had failed to secure Iran and Turkey, but he had not had strong military control there in the first place. He had succeeded in securing Eastern Europe. The cooperative aspects of the Grand Alliance had completely disappeared now. In 1946, Maxim Litvinov, now practically in exile in Moscow though still a deputy foreign minister, gave

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[10]Rubinstein, A., Soviet Foreign Policy since World War II: Imperial and Global (Boston: Winthrop, 1981) p. 45-47

these reasons for the breakdown of East-West relations to a Western reporter: first,

> "there has been a return in Russia to the outmoded concept of security in terms of territory -- the more you've got, the safer you are";

and second,

> "the root cause is the ideological conception prevailing {in Moscow} that conflict between the Communist and capitalist worlds is inevitable."[11]

The American attitude toward the Soviet Union steadily darkened during the post World War II years. George Kennan's "Mr. X" article of 1947[12] had dramatic effect and the policy of containment was forming.[13]

1948 was a watershed in Soviet-American relations in many ways. Two events in particular confirmed in Western policymakers' minds the expansionist aims of the U.S.S.R. First was the Czech coup in February, which shattered the illusion of democratic freedom in that country. Second, and involving the United States much more intimately, was the Berlin blockade in June. Truman's unexpected (from the Soviet point of view) response, the airlift, forced the Soviets to back down rather than risk direct confrontation with the United States. The Cold War was born.

American responses in the early years of the Cold War were conditioned to a large extent by its military strategy, which was in turn guided by six interrelated factors.

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[11]Quoted in Kaiser, R., Cold Winter, Cold War, (New York: Atheneum, 1974) p. 12-13

[12]"X", "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," Foreign Affairs, (July, 1947)

[13]Kennan had actually discussed the concept of containment in his famous "long telegram" of 1946.

First, The United States enjoyed unquestioned nuclear supremacy until the 1960's. The threat of the application of nuclear firepower, particularly in countervalue strikes, was deemed sufficient to protect both the United States and her allies. Nuclear superiority also allowed (apparently) for the reduction of more expensive conventional forces.

Second, American views of the nature of warfare were heavily drawn from the experience of World Wars I and II; namely, attrition warfare. The United States had suffered the least damage of any of the belligerents in World War II and saw itself realistically as better able to compete in this style of warfare than any other nation. The longer a war might last, the greater would become the American advantage.

Third, the United States possessed an absolute advantage in naval power over any potential enemy. America was unquestioned mistress of the sea. Flexible and mobile naval forces, with their global power projection capability, granted American policymakers considerable political freedom of action.

Fourth, and a corollary to the third point above, the principle potential adversaries, namely the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, were restricted in the use of military forces to areas contiguous to their borders. Only the United States had the logistic capability to operate effectively anywhere in the world.

Fifth, the United States emerged from World War II stronger economically and militarily than she had been at its commencement. This could not be said about any of the other belligerents. United States economic advantage was so strong she could afford to initiate programs to rebuild Europe and Japan.

Sixth, within the United States there was general consensus concerning the ultimate military objectives and

the objectives of American diplomacy. The Communists were the threat; they were hostile and expansionist, and they only understood force.[14] Thus military force (and the threat to use it) became an integral part of containment and remained so even after the Soviets acquired their own nuclear capability. In the succession of crises which characterized the Krushchev regime, American policy makers were put on the horns of a dilemma. For in addition to containment, there was another essential objective in American foreign policy: to avoid World War III. Both objectives have equal priority, with the following conflict. By adopting strong policies to limit communist expansion or to roll it back, the prospect of thermonuclear war increases. By seeking to avoid conflict and crisis with the U.S.S.R., the United States might be forced to accept communist infiltration or consolidation of power in some area. American statesmen have dealt with this quandary by resorting to the concept of the "balance of power", rather than deal with each situation in absolute terms. World War III would only be risked if the balance were in danger of being catastrophically upset. This concept has been used by both sides,[15] for the spectre of thermonuclear holocaust has discouraged both the United States and the Soviet Union from direct engagement of forces.[16] The dangerous crises have occurred as a result of misperception by one or both sides (the Cuban Missile Crisis) or proxy warfare run amuck (the 1973 Arab-Israeli war).

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[14]Brown G., and Korb, L., "The Economic and Political Restraints on Force Planning", Naval War College Review, (July-August 1979) p. 51-62

[15]The Soviet concept of the Correlation of Forces includes the western idea of the balance of power to some extent.

[16]Craig, G. and George, A., Force and Statecraft: Diplomatic Problems of Our Time, (New York: Oxford, 1983) Chap. 9

America has survived these crises, possibly primarily with a large dose of good luck. Are the processes of American constitutional democracy, so brilliantly conceived to prevent dangerous concentrations of power and to protect the people from their government, sufficient to cope effectively with the Soviet foe? Can the United States afford the design inefficiencies effecting that domestic protection when faced with a determined, patient external threat?

III. SYSTEMIC FACTORS

"Our means of governing ourselves, while it doubtless derives from European and Asiatic sources, nevertheless is not only unique and a mystery to non-Americans but a matter of wonder to Americans themselves. That it works at all is astonishing and that it works well is a matter of complete amazement."[17]

A. CONSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS

1. The Madisonian Model

When the Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia in the spring of 1787, the debate centered on the central dilemma which had fatally undermined the Articles of Confederation: how to strike a workable balance between a central government and the sovereign powers of the states. The recommended solutions fell into three categories: 1) form an all-powerful central government; 2) diffuse power completely among the states; 3) form a viable balance.

Alexander Hamilton espoused the first argument brilliantly. He presented eloquently why a strong central government is necessary,

"A man must be far gone in Utopian speculations who can seriously doubt that if these States should either be wholly disunited, or only united in partial confederacies, the subdivisions into which they might be thrown would have frequent and violent contests with each other. To presume a want of motives for such contests as an argument against their existence would be to forget that men are ambitious, vindictive, and rapacious. To look for a continuation of harmony between a number of independent, unconnected sovereignties situated in the same neighborhood would be to disregard the uniform course of human events, and to set at defiance the accumulated experience of the ages."[18]

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[17]Steinbeck, J., America and the Americans, (New York: Viking, 1966) p. 35

and went further (during the Convention) to recommend a lifetime President, Senate, and an absolute veto power of the central government over the states.

At the other end of the spectrum was George Mason. He desired the weakest form of central government which could still support confederacy. He met with little support for this idea at the Convention, as most of the 55 delegates believed the reason they were there in the first place was because the Articles of Confederation had so obviously been lacking.

Between these polar positions was James Madison. Madison had considered the problems of confederacies, both by historical examples and the contemporary Articles, very profoundly before arriving at the Convention. In Philadelphia he presented the so-called "Virginia Plan", which illustrated that the sovereignty of each state must be subordinate to the national government. A republic formed with a basic conflict of power between the national and state government could not survive either internal or external dangers. Madison was firmly in agreement with Hamilton that the federal government must be supreme. But the prospect of an all-powerful central sovereign terrified him, and thus he developed the brilliant model of republican government which was to become the Constitution of the United States.

Madison had little faith in human nature when granted political power and so attempted to construct a system by which human nature, good or bad, could be used for the common good. He did not try to suppress "factions" (political parties), as Washington had suggested, but rather saw them as natural by-products of liberty.

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[18]Hamilton, A., "Federalist No. 6" in Hamilton, A., Madison, J., and Jay, J., The Federalist Papers, (New York: Mentor, 1961)

"There are again two methods for removing the causes of faction: the one, by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests.

It could never be more truly said than of the first remedy that it is worse than the disease. Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an ailment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be a less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency."[19]

The key was to prevent any faction from becoming a tyrannical majority. By extrapolation he applied this same idea to the states themselves. How could the existence of nearly sovereign political entities, the states, be transformed into a source of strength for the new republic, instead of the source of enfeeblement and discord they had been under the Articles of Confederation?

Part of the answer was the formation of three branches of government, with their different areas of interest and responsibility. The second part of the solution was to make these three branches responsible to separate constituencies with staggered election times. Thus the states, principally through the Legislative Branch, were central to the process of federal government.

"The adversaries to the plan of the convention, instead of considering in the first place what degree of power was absolutely necessary for the purposes of the federal government, have exhausted themselves in a secondary inquiry into the possible consequences of the proposed degree of power to the governments of the particular States. But if the Union, as has been shown, be essential to the security of the people of America against foreign danger; if it be essential to their security against contentions and wars among the different States; if it be essential to guard them against those violent and oppressive factions which embitter the blessings of liberty and against those military establishments which must gradually poison its very fountain; if, in a word, the Union be essential to the happiness of the people of America, is it not preposterous to urge as an objection to a government, without which the objects of the Union cannot be attained, that such a government may

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[19]Madison, J., "Federalist No. 10"

derogate from the importance of the governments of the individual States?"[20]

In fact, he thought the states would dominate the federal government.

"The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the State governments are numerous and indefinite. The former will be exercised principally on external objects, as war, peace, negotiation, and foreign commerce; with which last the power of taxation will, for the most part, be connected. The powers reserved to the several States will extend to all objects which, in the ordinary course of affairs, concern the lives, liberties, and properties of the people, and the internal order, improvement, and prosperity of the State."[21]

This may have been a sales promotion for the new Constitution. The eighty-five Federalist Papers were, after all, written to sell the new government to the people. But many of the profound thoughts which went into the framework of the Constitution itself are presented eloquently in the Federalist Papers. The dilemma of creating a federal government strong enough to carry out its responsibilities without being tyrannical is central to the Constitutional debate, and Madison clearly believed he had found a solution.

"The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny. Were the federal Constitution, therefore, really chargeable with this accumulation of power, or with a mixture of powers, having a dangerous tendency to such an accumulation no further argument would be necessary to inspire a universal reprobation of the system."[22]

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[20]Madison, J., "Federalist No. 45"

[21]Ibid.

[22]Madison, J., "Federalist No. 47"

Clearly, Madison did not believe his system had "a dangerous tendency to such an accumulation" of power. The idea that collisions of conflicting interests could be healthy for the new government was something of a shock to some of Madison's idealistic contemporaries. But there it was.

This model was designed to prevent dangerous concentrations of power and it has done this well, by and large, throughout the history of this nation. It does not promote efficiency in planning and policymaking. Diffusion of power still exists structurally, but in times of danger great powers are granted to and assumed by the Executive to deal with the crisis. What Madison could not foresee was a time when the perception of danger and crisis would become almost continuous, and the relationship of the Executive to the legislature would be nearly transformed.

2. Growing Executive Power

The pressures of World War II and the ensuing Cold War upset the Madisonian balance dramatically. The model of separate constituencies seemed to hinder the effective pursuit of coherent foreign policy, particularly in light of increasing speed of events in the modern world. In this context, Congress seemed to be the paradigm of weaknesses inherent in democratic society, yet it still had vital (Constitutionally mandated) roles to play in the national security planning and policymaking process.

> "Notwithstanding whatever larger and more long-term vision individual members might develop concerning international affairs and American participation in them, as a practical matter the next election (usually two and no more than six years away) is the most important fact of life for the legislator. Nonetheless, under the constitutional design substantial foreign policy power was given to the Congress, presumably with the expectation that the institution would exercise that power with responsibility to a larger vision of interest than the individual member's political survival. Unfortunately, the critics asserted, the reality was too frequently contrary to the constitutional theory, and

nowhere was de Tocqueville's critique of democracy more appropriate than with respect to Congress."[23]

As the United States undertook the task of global management in the 1950's and 1960's, the office of the Presidency assumed greater and greater freedom of action. Particularly since 1956, with the onset of a seemingly endless string of international crises, Presidential power grew as the Congress became more and more reactive. Crises demand swift action, and the President, not Congress, has the means for quick action at his disposal. In competing with the President, the Congress already had two strikes against it.

"The legislative branch can hardly be a force for foreign affairs leadership and coherence. Congress can at most be a restraint on the President - sometimes for good, sometimes for ill - or the source of useful but sporadic initiatives. To the extent that Congress can impose specific restrictions like the Cooper-Church amendment prohibiting a return of our troops to Cambodia, or affect actual foreign policy by general legislation, it can have an undeniable effect. But this influence is limited primarily to constraining, modifying, or supplementing Presidential and executive branch aims and actions, not imposing a coherence of its own."[24]

3. Vietnam and the War Powers Resolution

Unilateral freedom of Presidential action and reciprocal Congressional submission peaked with the conduct of the Vietnam War. Presidential authority had become so swollen that President Johnson apparently did not sericusly

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[23]Oliver, J. and Nathan, J., "The American Envircnment for Security Planning," Kronenberg, P., ed., Planning U.S. Security: Defense Planning in the Eighties, (New York: Pergamon, 1982) p. 36. The de Tocqueville reference concerns his famous Democracy in America, vol. 1, (New York: Vintage Books, 1945). In particular, "Foreign politics demand scarcely any of those qualities which are peculiar to a democracy."

[24]Destler, I.M., Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy, (Princeton: Princeton Press, 1972) p. 85-86

consider requesting a declaration of war in 1964 after the famous Gulf of Tonkin incident. The Southeast Asia Resolution of 1964 (better known as the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution) could be consider as the quintessential example of Congressional acquiescence.[25] As Senator Jacob Javits was to later comment, the Congressional power of decision had been surrendered. The Congress had abdicated its constitutional duties.[26]

But the pendulum had begun to swing back. The commitment of millions of American soldiers to Vietnam strictly on Presidential authority and with no clear strategic goals, combined with increasingly frequent claims of Presidential prerogative, particularly under President Nixon, finally awoke the Congress to their responsibilities. The War Powers Resolution of November 1973 was passed (over President Nixon's veto). Its purpose:

> "....To fulfill the intent of the framers of the Constitution of the United States and insure that the collective judgment of both the Congress and the President will apply to the introduction of United States Armed Forces into hostilities, or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances, and to the continued use of such forces in hostilities or in such situations."[27]

Requiring Congressional assent in order to commit American military forces anywhere for more than ninety days, the War Powers Resolution can be seen as something of a Congressional renaissance. It implicitly requires the Congress to assume responsibility, with the President, for the deployment of American armed forces. The support of the

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[25]The Resolution passed in the Senate by 88-2 and in the House by unanimous voice vote 416-0.

[26]Javits, J., Who Makes War: The President Versus Congress, (New York: Morrow, 1973)

[27]94th Congress, Committee on International Relations, United States House of Representatives, "The War Powers Resolution," (Washington, D.C., 1975)

American people, through their elected representatives, will be required for commitment of American soldiers. In this way, hopefully, the schism between the American people and their Army experienced during the Vietnam war may be avoided in the future.[28]

B. THE DEFENSE BUDGET

The defense budget is a major constraint on the effective implementation of American military policies.[29] In theory strategic planners set force structure priorities, with the budget then structured to facilitate successful execution of national defense policy. In reality force planning and budgeting considerations are undertaken in a vacuum for the following reasons:

1. The United States does not have the resources to fully implement its standing military policies. Its present "one and a half wars" policy would require at least 750 ships, 30 Army and Marine Corps divisions, and 35 Tactical Air Wings. As of fiscal year 1983, the United States possessed 443 ships, 16 Army and 3 Marine Corps divisions, and 26 Tactical Air wings[30] barely enough to fight one conventional war in Europe, let alone another "half" contingency elsewhere.

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[28]Summers, H.G., in his book On Strategy, (New York: Dell, 1982), addresses this point at length. The Army was the enemy to a large portion of the American public. When that occurs, this nation is in very serious trouble.

[29]Probably the most comprehensive treatment of the budget is contained in Wildavsky, A., The Politics of the Budgetary Process, (Boston: Little, Brown & Co, 1979)

[30]Weinberger, C.W., Secretary of Defense, Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1983, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1983), appendix A-1

2. Political leaders rarely provide sufficient guidance to military planners. Politicians seldom know how they will react in a given situation and similarly have little advance idea of what the country should do in a crisis. Additionally, they like to keep as many options open as long as possible and have difficulty giving policy guidance in the abstract. Thus force planning is undertaken with little regard to likely actual use of forces, or most planning is done on a "worst case" basis, resulting in force plans with little or no relationship to resource constraints.
3. The budget process is so lengthy (about twenty months from beginning to end) that any policy guidance given at the beginning of the budget cycle is likely to be irrelevant by the time the finished budget is produced.
4. The defense budget, because of its enormous size, has serious effects on the national economy. The FY 1983 budget totalled $257,983,000,000.[31] About 80% of all federal employees work for the Department of Defense. Increases in defense spending are considered inflationary because they put more money into the hands of workers without increasing the supply of available goods for them to buy. At the same time, cuts in defense spending in any given area can have disastrous effects on local communities. Reductions in military aircraft procurement, for example, are likely to dramatic effect on the economies of Seattle or the south San Francisco Bay.

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[31]Ibid., appendix B-1

5. Unlike most of the remainder of the federal budget, the defense budget is not mandated by law. If a person qualifies for Medicare or Social Security, the government must pay. It is mandated by law and thus their budgets are basically uncontrollable. Most of the defense budget is controllable; it is thus often tinkered with by both Presidents and Congress for political ends. It should be noted however that the military goals the budget ostensibly is designed to fulfill seldom are modified in relation to the altered budget.
6. The Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS) and attendant systems analysis, while helpful in developing a baseline budget, is not adequate for force planning and for developing a realistic budget to support it because many of the variables in policymaking and force planning are not quantifiable. Many crucial decisions must be made by intuition and judgment, which are not well coordinated with PPBS. And there is always the danger of the system acquiring a life of its own:

"Within recent years, the PPBS has grown top-heavy and congested with paperwork and detail, leading to an overemphasis on programming and unneeded data, to the neglect of strategic planning and professional military advice."[32]

PPBS requires an ability to know what is needed which is beyond present human capabilities. By assuming that objectives can be stated precisely and quantifiable measures can be found for them, PPBS is doomed to failure from the onset.[33] PPBS also makes it impossible to avoid expensive failures.

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[32]Ibid. p. I-46

[33]The Politics of the Budgetary Process, p. 199

"If error is to be altered, it must be relatively easy to correct. But PPB makes it hard. Its 'systems' are characterized by their proponents as highly differentiated and tightly linked. The rationale for program budgeting lies in its connectedness -- like programs are grouped together. Program structures are meant to replace the confused concatenations of line-items with clearly differentiated, non-overlapping boundaries; only one set of programs to a structure. This means that a change in one element or structure must result in a change reverberating throughout every element in the same system. Instead of alerting only neighboring units or central control units, which would make change feasible, all are, so to speak, wired together, so the choice is effectively all or none."[34]

7. The defense budget is too large and complex for any one authority to fully grasp. With over 1700 program elements, over 5,000 line items, and approximately 137 different accounting systems, the budget tends to become merely the compilation of all the program managers' individual inputs, not the executive tool of prudent strategic planning.[35] Each service attempts to structure itself to be independent of the other services in time of emergency. Each service desires to rely only on its own resources. Theoretically, the Secretary of Defense is above it all, tying together service requests into a coherent force structure, but he has neither the time nor the staff to cope with such a task. The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) is even more limited, its staff being constrained to four hundred personnel, and even less able to evaluate effectively individual service inputs. Service staffs average about two thousand personnel, and as the Joint Chiefs are also the heads of their respective services, it is very difficult for them appraise their home services' proposals in the joint arena in a unbiased manner. Even before the

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[34]Ibid., p. 201

[35]Interview with Dr. Richard Perle, Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Policy), 8 May 1984.

budget goes to Congress there is little consistency, except in the continuation of previous years' programs.

Once in Congress, any semblance of strategic planning coherence which may have survived in the budget as it exited the Pentagon is lost. The Department of Defense structures the budget in program categories, such as Research and Development, Strategic Forces, etc. Congress authorizes funds by line item, such "Procurement, Army." Thus an intelligently structured program designed to support a carefully reasoned policy can be ruined by line item appropriation in Congress. And the Congressmen are may not even aware they have done any harm.

8. The defense budget is very susceptible to shifting political winds. Unnecessary bases are kept in operation because their closure would have detrimental effect on an influential congressman's district. Unnecessary new weapons systems are introduced and obsolete old ones kept in production because of powerful business and political contacts on Capitol Hill.

Political pressures also constrain DoD from implementing necessary policies domestically. For example, political pressures in Wisconsin, Michigan, and Texas precluded construction of Project Seafarer in any of those states. The country's most reliable and survivable strategic system, the SSBN force, thus went wanting for a more reliable communication system to more fully realize its potential. Seafarer was eventually built, but much reduced in size and transmitting power.

9. The budget process is slow and the development and procurement of systems even slower. Thus policy makers are typically confronted with an existing force designed 15-20 years ago or more, and knowing

that any impact they may have on the system will not be felt more another 15-20 years. At any given time, the force in being determines the policies pursued, and force planning done in this context may have little meaning by the time those planned forces are translated into hardware.[36]

C. THE MEDIA -- THE FOURTH BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT?

The activity of the press, and the manipulation of it by governmental actors, is one of the most potent forces on the American political scene. Its effect upon the Presidency, the Executive bureaucracy, and the Congress has been realized only in the past few decades. With the development of instantaneous mass communication, the modern press corps has assumed powers unimagined by previous generations. The revolution in the power of publicity in America can create events[37] and even create changes in the fundamental balance of the government itself.

1. The President and the Press

The President of the United States is the most highly publicized individual on earth. He has instant access to the media as he sees fit. His most trivial actions or unguarded remarks are instant news the world over. The President cannot escape the press, but its power can be detrimental or beneficial to him depending on how well he can understand the subtle nuances of American mass media.

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[36]Brown, G. and Korb, L., "The Economic and Political Restraints on Force Planning", Naval War College Review, July-August 1979

[37]The 1968 Democratic Convention is clearly a case in point. Demonstrators, many blocks from the convention itself, chanted "The Whole World Is Watching" as they clashed with Chicago police.

Central to his control of the press is the Presidential press conference. The conference contains opportunities for both triumph and disaster. The President selects the basic content of each conference by his opening remarks, although the press often chooses the form the conference will take once questioning begins. The conference is, as Douglas Cater described it, "a central act in the high drama of American government."[38] Indeed, the significance of the press conference is difficult to overestimate. It is one of the few moments when the President stands before the American public without the many trappings of office which normally separate him from it. It is an opportunity for him to create events, focus national and international attention on problems he chooses, and attach the degree of gravity he desires to those problems.

The press conference obviously entails risks. After the brief opening statement, any subject is fair game. Questions may range from great affairs of foreign policy to a small scandal brewing at the bottom of an executive agency. To the former the President gives much reflection; he has probably not heard about the latter before then. Yet he must handle both with aplomb. He risks embarrassment, and quite possibly the questions he was best prepared to answer will not be asked at all. In this sense the press holds a strong hand in the conference, for reporters tend to ask questions which reflect the interests of the newspapers, television news networks, or wire-services they represent. A press conference may consist of question on Iowa pork prices and the like, while never approaching a foreign policy or defense issue.

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[38]Cater, D., The Fourth Branch of Government, (New York: Vintage Books, 1965) p.25

There is a real danger in the Presidential press conference which is engendered by the open and rather casual atmosphere which tends to prevail there. That is the possibility of a stray, unguarded remark being made by the President, subsequently taken cut of context and blown out of proportion. As the world grows ever more dangerous, the consequences of these slips-of-the-tongue become ever more grave. The classic example of this political phenomenon is President Truman's press conference in November 1951. The Chinese had shortly before entered the Korean War and it was becoming clear that another retreat down the peninsula was imminent. When asked about the possible use of nuclear weapons in the Korean theater, the President reponded that such weapons were "always under consideration." "Always" was omitted from the headlines the following day and the story that President Truman was seriously considering the use of nuclear weapons in Korea flashed across the world.

That incident illustrates the harm which can be done by a slightly careless Presidential remark and a more than slightly irresponsible press. Nevertheless, the press conference is a great tool for a skillful president. It affords him an opportunity to keep attention focused on himself. By his words and gestures he can give powerful emphasis to his programs or denigrate those of his political rivals. And unlike a formal speech, he has an chance there to chat with the public, rather than lecture to it.[39]

2. Congress and the Press

The era of Senator Joseph McCarthy (roughly 1950-1953), climaxing with the Army-McCarthy hearings, made the Congress, not the President, the center of public attention and the principle source of information and news in the

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[39]Ibid., p. 26

nation's capitol. Although Presidents were soon to recapture the limelight, a change in how American government functions had taken place.

"It is important, I believe, to examine the consequences of this shift in public attention. The investigations themselves were singularly barren of conclusions. Despite all the furor, they did not result in drastic legislative reforms or even in substantial defeats to the Administration's foreign program. Yet, it would be idle to claim that this shift had not affected the balance of power in American government. It served to diminish the usefulness of a great many of the President's chief lieutenants and to elevate into positions of commanding importance hitherto obscure members of Congress. It enabled one comparatively junior Senator lacking the conventional trappings of seniority and prestige to sustain for a considerable time a threat to the President's control over the Executive Branch. It created serious doubts at home and abroad whether the the President did in fact stand at the helm of government during a critical time in world affairs."[40]

The new found publicity power of the Congress has not gone unnoticed by subsequent generations of Congressmen. Congressmen are infatuated with public opinion and know that the hometown press is one of the most powerful influences in their continued political futures. The modern press and the modern Congress were made for each other. Reporters frequently outnumber legislators on the House floor and in committee. With the arrival of television in the House of Representatives, Congressmen can now make carefully choreographed performances to be broadcast back to their constituents.

It was perhaps inevitable that Congress would become nearly co-equal with the White House as a news beat. The President is the center of public fascination because of the immense power personified in that one personage. The House of Representatives and the Senate lack such power, but Congressional proceedings are open by and large, with corresponding ease of access by reporters. The President can

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[40]Ibid., p. 9

exert careful control over how news is released from the White House and reporters are dependent on his favors in that way. But Congress is open territory.

But more than easy access is involved. The business of Congress is tailor-made for sensational news reporting. Congress is the scene of high intrigue and drama. The constitutional tensions and balances stand out in bold relief during Congressional hearings and floor deliberations.

Easy access and a continuous flow of good stories can lead to a congressional bias in the news. It also makes for strange bedfellows. Newsmen and Congressmen tend to develop intimate and privileged relationships. Congressmen are dependent on newsmen for good publicity back in the local districts. Newsmen are dependent on Congressmen for "exclusives" and "scoops." News is often leaked to the press as a personal favor and newsmen recognize this. Neither profits by jeopardizing this relationship and in Executive-Legislative squabbles, the press tends to come down on the Congressional side. Abuses in the Executive, when aired in the press, always have a Congressional committee standing by to inquire into them, with much further publicity. The Executive has no corresponding organ for attacking Congressional abuses.

This intimate relationship leads to selective publicity, which is harmful to good government in this context. The Congress becomes something of a protected species. Each year, during the budgetary debates and squabbles with the President, Congressmen cut funds from military programs with great fanfare. The action is dutifully rewarded with news reports of Congressional concern over unbalanced budgets, Executive insensitivity to welfare programs, etc., while later in the year Congress will quietly restore the funds through supplemental appropriations,

seldcm given play in the open press. Newsmen don't dare tell tne truth (that Congressmen make the cuts with every intention cf restoring the funds later) for fear of alienating their precicus Congressional ccntacts. The sober business of goverrment is increasingly perverted by excessive media exposure.

Perhaps American government has reached a point of cver-ccmmunicatiom and over-publicity. As Daniel Boorstin point out, no society can survive unrestrained communication. Democracy thrives on selective communication selected by the self-controlled citizen.

"But democracy depends on the communication which is sharing, not on that which is purely self-expressive, explosive cr vituperative. Our new cpportunities and our new temptaticns to overccmmunicate require a new and harder self-discipline among citizens, one of the most difficult forms of discipline tc enforce. It illustrates the wisdcm of the English judge whc said, 'Civilization must be measured by the extent of obedience to the unenforceable.' In a world cf overccmmunication, the survival of a decent society may depend cn our willingness to accept this truth."[41]

3. The Bureaucracy and the Press

The Executive bureaucracy uses the press to influence Presidential decisions by systematically leaking information tc it. The use of leaks is a standard bureaucratic maneuver in the struggle between career civil servants and the President's men.

Most often news is released to the press through formal press conferences and ccncerns governmental decisicns already made. A large portion, however, is leaked to the press for the following reasons:

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[41]Bocrstin, D.J., Democracy and Its Discontents: Reflecticns on Everyday America, (New York: Random House, 1974) p.10-11

1. Tc get a message through to senior officials. Subordinate officials in the executive departments can be frustrated by perceived lack of access to the Secretary and lack of acceptance of their ideas as to how things should be done. Given that everyone on Washington reads "The Washington Post," judicious leaking of alternate policies can assure the attention of the Secretary to them, and gain access tc him by the disgruntled official.
2. Tc make information appear to originate from a higher or more authoritative source.
3. Because the release of the information is unauthorized. Officials occasionally feel information needs tc be made public against the wishes of their superiors and will leak it when formal release vis press conferences is prohibited. They will at the same time take elaborate safety precautions to disassociate themselves with the leak.
4. Tc undermine rivals. Use of leaks to reduce an opponent's influence or remove him completely from government is a common technique. There are several methods.
   a) Try to show an opponent as advocating a position which lacks any support. During the Cuban Missile Crisis Adlai Stevenson, United States Ambassador to the United Nations, attempted to raise some of the broader implications of the crisis during the Cabinet meetings. After pointing out alternative strategies to those of confrontation and tests of will, such as trading Jupiter missiles in Turkey for Soviet missiles in Cuba, he was attacked as advocating appeasement. After the Crisis had passed images of Munich were drawn by columnist Stewart Alsop in the Saturday Evening Post.

President Kennedy enjoyed a close association with Alsop and speculation continues as to whether Kennedy himself leaked the closed Cabinet deliberations.

b) Portray the opponent as incompetent or performing poorly. Continuing leaks from lower echelon Environmental Protection Agency officials undoubtedly had a role in Ann Burford's resignation as head of the agency.

c) Portray an official as not loyal to the President. Again, the Stevenson case during and after the Cuban Missile Crisis is cogent.

d) To attract the attention of the President. The interest of the President in a subject can often be determined by the intensity of press interest in it. Issues which would otherwise remain entombed in the Executive bureaucracy thus are dealt with directly by the President.

IV. HUMAN FACTORS

A. CONSENSUS IN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL OUTLOOK

Following World War II there existed a consensus in the United States on America's proper role in international affairs, basically supporting an activist United States role in the world centered on containing communism.

In the 1970's, in the aftermath of Vietnam, this globalist foreign policy consensus dissolved and domestic debate on the appropriate American place in international politics drew three battle lines: the Cold War Internationalists, the Post-Cold War Internationalists, and the Isolationists.

1. The Cold War Internationalists continue to see the international system, appropriately, as still functioning under Cold War precepts. The fundamental orientation of world affairs in East-West. The United States is confronted with a dangerous coalition of hostile forces centered in Moscow. The U.S.S.R. is expansionist and extremely patient, and will not desist in its efforts to achieve world hegemony. The Cold War Internationalists see many parallels in U.S. policies of the 1970's (accommodation and detente) with the policies pursued by western democracies during the 1930's.

Restoration of a military balance is essential for United States, because it is the only country in the world with the potential to resist heavily armed, expansionist communist power; only the United States has the potential power to preserve the political and territorial integrity of the Free World.[42]

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[42]Holsti, O.R., "The Three-Headed Eagle," International Studies Quarterly, (September, 1979), p.345

2. The Post-Cold War Internationalists' outlook is based on three related concepts.

First, the world is more complex than the vision of the Cold War Internationalists allows.[43] There has been a systemic change; the boundaries of nation-states no longer accurately define the international system presently in existence. Zero-sum game models no longer apply. Although military security issues are still very important, future bases of conflict are more likely found in issues such as over-population, regional antagonisms in the Third World, and uncontrolled technological advance. Transnational businesses are as influential in world events as national governments, and often more powerful. In short, the areas of potential conflict in the world are aligned along a North-South axis rather than East-West, and traditional balance-of-power Cold War politics is ill-equipped to deal with them. The United States, despite its enormous power, cannot solve the world's problems alone in a system of complex interdependence.

Second, the U.S.S.R. is not as dangerous to the United States and the world at large as the Cold War Internationalists would have us believe. Although militarily very powerful, the Soviet Union has severe domestic problems similar to Third World nations, and has become much more conservative in its international conduct as it grows older.

Third, though the Soviets may be becoming more conservative, their motives in international affairs are by no means philanthropic. The United States must play a vital role in establishing and maintaining a stable world order; shirking this duty would leave the system open to nations whose

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[43]Keohane, R. and Nye, J., Power and Interdependence, (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1976) is an outstanding presentation of the Post-Cold War Internationalist viewpoint.

designs are domination and hegemony. In the Post-Cold War Internationalist vision, the old tactics of confrontation and power politics must be replaced with cooperation, negotiation, and a deeper understanding of the systemic change in the international structure.

3. The Isolationists agree with the Post-Cold War Internationalists that bi-polar descriptions of the international structure are inaccurate and that the Soviet Union has been transformed from an aggressively expansionistic nation to a conservative great power with severe domestic problems. The Isolationists attribute the massive Soviet military build-up to legitimate Soviet domestic security fears of a two front war and to traditional Russian paranoia. Although the Soviet Union possesses tremendous military potential, it has little intention of using it against the West. As there is no other nation capable of seriously threatening the United States, logically American problems and threats to American institutions are internal to the United States itself. Inflation, unemployment, poverty, etc. are much greater menaces to American security than any foreign threats.

The Isolationists obviously part company sharply with both camps of the Internationalists, regarding East-west and North-South axes of conflict as largely irrelevant and denying that the United States has any valid reason for extensive international involvement. The United States should further: 1) negotiate outstanding disputes with the U.S.S.R.; 2) conduct relations with the Third World on the basis of mutual shared interests[44] and 3) exert influence in the world through example, by solving its own pressing domestic problems.[45]

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[44]The Isolationists consider it a cardinal lesson of the Vietnam War that the United States cannot provide security for people who are unwilling to work for it.

B. PRESIDENTIAL INTERESTS

The President is the central figure in the direction and execution of American foreign policy. In Utopia he would be above political interests and operate only for the good of the nation; in reality the President must incorporate a broad spectrum of political concerns into his thinking on issues of international relations, and he must play a variety of roles when representing those issues to the American public.

The President, by virtue of the fact that he is the single most visible and powerful political figure in the United States government, simplifies perceptions of the government and its processes. He provides the principle source of energy and initiative within the government. He also serves as a focal point for citizens to gain a sense of what is going on in the government. For many citizens, he is the only means of following politics.

The President has many ceremonial duties, not unlike the European monarchies. Combined with the microscopic publicity surrounding his personal life, these provide an outlet for emotional expression by the public. The sudden death of a President, for example, is an occasion for national grieving regardless of the individual personality of the man himself. The public reactions following the deaths of Lincoln, Harding, Roosevelt, and Kennedy are nearly identical in their outpouring of pent-up emotion. The death of a President also tends to be a unifying experience for the nation, with partisan politics laid aside, at least temporarily.

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[45] Kennan, G., The Cloud of Danger, (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1977)

The President provides the citizenry with a vicarious means of political action, particularly in times of crisis. People often identify with the President when he is taking decisive action on some issue, in much the same way they might identify with a movie hero. A decisive and effective President tends to give people a sense that they are somehow more in control of their lives and environment.[46]

Presidential political interests break down to two basic areas.

1. Election/Domestic Politics

The Presidential election process is one of the most profound influences upon Presidential conduct in foreign affairs. While the system has been adequate for American international interests for most of the nation's history, doubts are now arising as to the continues benefits to be gained from it. The quadrennial election defines the national political life cycle.

"The pattern of what might be termed Presidential bureaurhytms is depressingly familiar. U.S. administrations confidently sail into office on a tide of extravagant campaign promises to rectify the failures of the preceding regime. But no matter how desirable these promises, the initial momentum soon falters in the face of criticism at home and abroad, the rediscovery of useful policies of the past, and the difficulty in achieving dramatic results. In addition, Congress, frustrated by its own inability to control events, moves with indecent speed from honeymoon to divorce. The first grace year is invariably followed by 2 years of retreat. After colliding with complexity and ambiguity, Presidents are often forced into about-faces by what journalist Walter Lippmann called the suction of the center. By the end of the third year modest results are often achieved and the ship of state is fixed on a more or less steady course. At that point, however, the approaching Presidential election triggers a new foreign policy debate loaded with hyperbole and distortion, effectively undoing much hard-won progress."[47]

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[46]Greenstein, F.I., "The Best-Known American," in Burnham, W.D., ed., Politics/America, (New York: Nostrand, 1973)

[47]Bloomfield, L.P., "What's Wrong with Transitions," Foreign Policy, (Summer, 1984)

The impact of the election on foreign policy and vice-versa forces Presidents to play to three types of issues during an election year:

1. Creating a Popular Image among the Electorate.

Presidential popularity usually rises when the President is seen as acting decisively and achieving results. Presidents realize that they have greater latitude of action in foreign rather than domestic affairs,[48] so foreign policy initiatives intended for domestic effect are to be expected prior to the election. The consequences of such action cannot reasonably be foreseen, precisely because they are foreign policies undertaken for domestic effect.

Dramatic foreign policy moves are particularly desirable if they portray the President as a man of peace. President Nixon's overwhelming victory over George McGovern in 1972 was undoubtedly aided by his opening of relations with China and the SALT I agreement.[49] President Carter's inability to successfully resolve the Iranian Hostage Crisis contributed to a critical lack of confidence at the ballot box.

There is a problem with public opinion as a guide in foreign policy of which the United States experience in Vietnam is illustrative. The public is not capable of giving operational policy direction. The public may approve or disapprove of actions taken but prediction of the public mood at any given time is highly speculative. Furthermore, it usually takes a long time before a sizable public interest in a foreign policy issue is aroused, even with the presence of a dogged press corps. Public interest in Vietnam was low for the first 4-5 years, in spite of rising American

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[48]Wildavsky, A., "The Two Presidencies," in Burnham, W.D., Politics / America, (New York: Nostrand, 1973)

[49]Halperin, M.H., Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1974), p. 68

military involvement and resultant casualties. Even when public interest was driven to a high level, the public still tended to support Presidential action regarding Vietnam.[50] The rapid shift in public opinion on Vietnam is a lesson for Presidents in their attempts to manipulate the mood of the electorate.

2. Denying a Major Issue to Opponents.

A vital concern of the President is to avoid issues which provide political rivals weapons to use against him during the election. This concern often results in paradoxical decisions. The early conduct of the wars in Korea and Vietnam are illuminative in this regard.

President Truman, after being heavily criticized for "allowing" China to "go Communist," was politically unable to allow Korea to be overrun by communists, even after explicitly stating on several occasions that the United States had no vital interest there.[51] As American casualties in Korea grew in number , criticism mounted and American involvement in Korea became a pivotal campaign issue in the election of 1952. The dilemma appears in attempting to save a country from communism while not committing American soldiers to accomplish that goal. This problem is also apparent in Presidents Kennedy's and Johnson's attempts to keep America's commitment to democracy in South Vietnam highly visible while giving American combat casualties suffered in pursuit of that end a low profile. In 1963, President Kennedy had decided to withdraw all American military personnel from Vietnam, but considered it political suicide to be seen abandoning a fellow democracy just one year before the election. He needed to wait until the 1964 election had been sucessfully hurdled.

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[50]"The Two Presidencies"

[51]Nathan, J.A., and Oliver, J.K., United States Foreign Policy and World Order, (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1981)

"In 1965 I'll be damned everywhere as a Communist appeaser. But I don't care. If I tried to pull out completely now, we would have another Joe McCarthy red scare on our hands, but I can do it after I'm reelected. So we had better make damned sure that I am reelected."[52]

If President Kennedy had not made a critical foreign policy decision (to maintain American soldiers in Vietnam until 1965) based heavily on a domestic political interest, clearly the history of American involvement in South East Asia would be very different.

3. Appealing to Special Interest Groups.

The effect of special interest groups on domestic policies is easy to measure because there is an organized interest group lobbying for nearly every possible area of concern. These groups provide cues to the President in advance when a proposed policy is likely to affect them. In this way they are distinguished from the general public, which usually renders its judgment after the fact.

In foreign policy the effect of special interests is most pronounced when the domestic economy is perceived to be affected and when strong ethnic ties are involved. In the former, such as the American automobile industry interest in trade relations with Japan and West Germany, a steady level of moderate pressure by industry lobbyists is the rule. This type of pressure is a more or less constant feature of the American political scene, because a broad range of domestic interests are involved, not just election issues. The health of the automobile industry has been a barometer for the health of the American economy in general. In the latter, special interests are likely to most effective when narrowly and intensely focused during a time of crisis. Pressure from American Jews was instrumental in United States recognition of the state of Israel and in overt mili-

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[52] Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy, p. 70

tary and economic aid, but has not prevented American military and economic aid the Israel's Arab neighbors.

2. Foreign Affairs/International Politics

As stated earlier, Presidents tend to have greater freedom of action in foreign affairs than they have in domestic business. However, even though the President can invariably get support for his foreign policies, the problem of finding viable policies is a very real one. As the President comes to the White House domestic policies are fairly clearly laid out by Party platforms, powerful Congressmen whose support he relies upon, etc. Existing domestic policies change only incrementally and the President usually finds it easy to make small adjustments as the political situations slowly alters. The international environment, however, can change rapidly and unpredictably. Any President knows he must support foreign aid to friendly countries and long standing treaty commitments such as NATO, but sudden confrontations between two friendly nations, such as England and Argentina in the Falkland Islands, create a policy quandary.

Another reason the President has so much more control over foreign versus domestic policy lies in the evolution of the international structure since World War II. With the dismantling of the great colonial empires, the number of sovereign nations has more than tripled. In addition to the sheer complexity of maintaining diplomatic relations with such large numbers, the world has become a much more dangerous place.

The ever-present possibility of thermonuclear war is a constant concern of the President. But the chance of a Soviet-American nuclear war, while catastrophic in its consequences, does not in itself contribute to the new complexity of international relations. Events in

Afghanistan, for example, are important to the United States because they are part of a larger global power struggle. The Soviet Union and the United States are in constant competition for the support of smaller nations. The background of this relationship was sketched in Chapter 1.

In the context of that power struggle, shrewd leaders of small and apparently inconsequential countries can play the superpowers against each other and the consequences of action by lesser powers can be worldwide. Libya's claim of the Gulf of Sydra as territorial water is in itself a small matter, but the implications of such an action, if unchallenged, are enormous. In a nation with vital interests in the free navigation of international shipping, such as the United States, the highest levels of the government will be focused on resolving the problem. Thus a primitive country like Libya will draw the attention of the President all out of proportion to the capability of Libya to actually do harm to the United States. In addition to the principles of international law involved in the case, Libya is heavily supported by the Soviet Union, increasing the importance of this otherwise obscure country on the international scene, with a corresponding increase in the amount of time the President will devote to it.

Failures in domestic policy may hurt the President, but failures in the international arena may critically damage American interests or even result in the destruction of the nation. Presidents realize this and, as a result, foreign policy concerns tend to drive out domestic policy. Additionally, foreign policy decisions are often perceived to be irreversible[53] and as a commitment of future generations. In short, because of the stakes involved in

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[53]"The Two Presidencies"

international affairs, Presidents will dedicate much more of their time and political resources to them.

> "If decisions are perceived to be both important and irreversible, there is every reason for Presidents to devote a great deal of resources to them. Presidents have to oriented toward the future in the use of their resources. They served a fixed term in office, and they cannot automatically count on support from the populace, Congress, or the administrative apparatus. They have to be careful, therefore, to husband their resources for pressing future needs. But because the consequences of events in foreign affairs are potentially more grave, faster to manifest themselves, and less easily reversible than in domestic affairs, Presidents are more willing to use up their resources."[54]

C. PUBLIC OPINION

1. Opinion as a Concept

Opinion, as a concept, has had a remarkably successful career. An opinion is a belief held with conviction, but not necessarily substantiated by fact. The quality of an opinion is often determined by the strength with which it is held rather than the validity of its logic.

With the rise of representative democracies in the late eighteenth century, opinion acquired a great power, especially when preceeded by the word "public." Public opinion quickly began to dominate the democratic political landscape, particularly in the United States. Few politicians dare question its wisdom. Since Thomas Jefferson, Presidents have paid obligatory homage to Public Opinion.

As mass communications came into being, so too came mass-production and mass-marketing, with the attendant need to know the preferences of the consuming public. Out of this need grew the opinion polls, which quickly found their way from the business of business to the business of politics. In the present day, public opinion seems to be a knowable quantity (measureable to a fraction of a percentage).

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[54]Ibid., p.145

With its ostensibly scientific trappings, public opinion has acquired enormous prestige. While an individual opinion, no matter how knowledgable or experienced the individual, is still seen as slightly disreputable, public opinion, being the opinion of no one in particular, is above reproach.

An error inherent in public opinion polling is the assumption that the opinion of the public can be treated as the expression of the interests of The People as a historical community. This assumption is false. The People are not merely the aggregate of living persons in the nation at a given time. The People includes past and future generations as well, and thus is constantly in flux. The People, cited in the Constitution of the United States on June 21, 1788, had changed before the ink had dried on that document. Fifty years later The People had changed dramatically; one hundred years later, completely.[55]

Public opinion, as measured via voting booths and opinion polls, is entitled to some representation in the government. But Public Opinion should be taken for what it is and nothing more. It is not a statement of the national interest. It is the opinion of a plurality of the voters at a given time. That a plurality of people think in a given way or hold a certain opinion has no bearing on that opinion's efficacy as sound public policy.

"The unhappy truth is that the prevailing public opinion has been destructuvely wrong at the critical junctures. The people have imposed a veto upon the judgment of informed and responsible officials. They have compelled the governments, which usually knew what would have been wiser, or was necessary, or was more expedient, to be too late with too little, or too long with too much, too pacifist in peace and too bellicose in war, too neutralist or appeasing in negotiation or too intransigent. Mass opinion has acquired mounting power in this century. It has shown itself to be a dangerous master of decisions when the stakes are life and death."[56]

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[55]The Public Philosophy, p.32-36

[56]Ibid., p. 24

2. Operational Public Opinion

It is a tenet of American politics that major issues attracting the intense interest of the electorate tend to be domestic rather than foreign.[57] Yet public opinion is frequently cited as an influence upon United States foreign policy. How does public opinion affect actors in the planning and policymaking process?

There are three theoretical models describing ways elected officials should represent their constituencies.

1. The Instructed Delegate, acting as a majority of his constituents directs, regardless of his own views and experience.
2. The Responsible Party Member, looking to his political party for instruction. This model has somewhat limited utility in the American foreign policy process because of the 2/3 vote required for treaty ratification (a 2/3 majority in the Senate by one political party is a very rare thing in American politics). Additionally, the two major American political parties tend to blur at the center and there has existed a long standing tradition of bi-partisanship in foreign affairs.
3. The Burkean Role, based on the theory of Edmund Burke, a member of the British Parliament in the late eighteenth century. Burke argued that a representative should pursue his constituents' best interests, not be merely the puppet of their will. The representative should not be a slave to public opinion, but rather use his greater abilities and access to facts to act responsibly for his people.

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[57]Hughes, B.B., The Domestic Context of American Foreign Policy, (San Francisco: Freeman, 1978), p. 92

Individual Congressmen and Senators will see themselves acting in one or more of these roles depending largely on which issue they are facing. In domestic politics they desire at least to appear to acting in the instructed delegate and/or responsible party member role. In foreign affairs most responsible officials see themselves as playing a Burkean role. Even when acting in the Burkean model, representatives, including the President, desire to appear to be responsive to their constituents' wishes. Thus public opinion can and does have an effect on foreign policy.

The effect of attentive publics and interest groups on policymaking and planning can be substantial. What the President perceives public opinion to be on a policy issue influences his action. More explicitly, what he perceives to be the public reaction to proposed policy(s) influences his estimate of the probable effectiveness of that policy, and the effect that public reaction to one policy may have on other policies and programs he is pursuing.

The election of Richard Nixon in 1968 is an example. Looking at President Nixon's past, one would have expected him to have been a hardliner in Vietnam, to reject negotiations with the communists, and to resist any appearance of appeasement. To do so would have been to continue the policies of the Johnson Administration in Vietnam. Opposition to the war had grown great enough by 1968 that merely continuing those policies would have been disastrous, let alone trying to escalate the conflict to put more pressure on the communists. President Nixon modified his own policy preferences to defuse the opposition to the war somewhat while maintaining credibility with his conservative power base. The result was the "Nixon Doctrine", also known as "Vietnamization." American forces were gradually withdrawn while South Vietnamese forces were improved qualitatively. Nixon avoided a negotiated settlement with the North

Vietnamese.[58] The attentive public opposing the war did not get all it wanted, but undoubtedly exerted strong influence on the President's action regarding Vietnam.

The period between World Wars I and II more broadly illustrates some of the dangerous influences of mass opinion on foreign policy.

Following World War I there was almost unanimous opinion in western democracies that professional diplomats had largely caused the war. The effect of this feeling, still in existence today, has been to force political leaders to reduce the role of diplomatic professionals and to assume most of these duties themselves. Instead of allowing chiefs of missions abroad to do the work for which they have spent their entire careers in the Foreign Service Corps preparing, Presidents and Secretaries of State have consistently attempted to conduct foreign diplomacy either by telephone or by traveling themselves to the area of concern. There are several principle problems associated with this practice:

1. Presidents and Secretaries are very busy men. They have not spent enough time learning all the intricacies at play in the negotiations at hand, and they do not have that time now.
2. Telephone conversations and face-to-face encounters with foreign heads of state allow little opportunity for reflection. Combined with the imprecise chance exchanges that lurk in such meetings, many factors work against satisfactory pursuit of national interests there.
3. Meeting at such a high level convey the impression that vital national interests are at stake. The impression is often false, but since it exists, the

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[58]Hilsman, R., The Politics of Policy Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs, (New York: Harper and Row, 1971) p. 104

political costs of failure are raised significantly. There is a palpable increase in the impetus the secure some kind of agreement, often at the expense of long-range interests.

With the emphasis on officials at the highest levels conducting international diplomacy came a change in the format of these meetings. Diplomatic proceedings went public. "Open covenants openly arrived at" is the legacy of Woodrow Wilson. Diplomacy by conference is the offspring of that legacy and the publicity that attends such conferences ensures that they will be fruitless at best, and more probably harmful to the democratic, open societies involved. Large conferences, such as Munich in 1938, or Strategic Arms Reduction Talks today, have satisfied the prerequisite for openess with a vengeance and are doomed to fail before the delegates even shake hands. All conferences begin by the heads of the delegations making public statements on their positions and objectives. Once such statements are made with such high visibility, any concession to the opposition is seen as a retreat, politically impossible for most leaders. Agreement is precluded from the onset because no compromise is possible. No real negotiation can take place in the stifling atmosphere of continuous press intrusions.

This breakdown of international diplomacy, attributable to the influence of obtrusive Public Opinion through an over-zealous Press, is one of the most distrubing phenomena of twentieth century international relations. This certainly is a time when effective communication between powerful adversaries is essential.

V. THE NATIONAL INTEREST

The concept of the national interest is central to the strategic planning process. Policies are drawn up and implemented in its name; it is invoked whenever American forces are committed and lives put at risk. Defining and identifying national interests is a harrowing and difficult task, but vital to the planning process. How can the nation's resources be committed to an idea which seemingly defies definition? This chapter will attempt to shed some light on this elusive concept as well as explore some of its uses for the strategic planner.

A. APPROACHES TO DEFINITION

For centuries the concept of national interest was seen only in terms of power politics. The American Revolution was something of a watershed in national interest theory with the idea of moral principle rather than strict pursuit of power guiding national policy. The competition between moral law and power politics produced three types of American statesmen: the realists, the idealists, and the moralists.

1. Realists

The realist school of the national interests is personified by Alexander Hamilton. Thinking and acting in terms of power politics are its tenets. United States foreign policy was structured along those lines during the first decades of its existence (as long as the Federalists held sway). An example of American realist behavior is the War of the First Coalition in 1793.

The War of the First Coalition pitted Austria, Prussia, Sardinia, Great Britain, and the United Netherlands against France. The United States was bound to France by a treaty of alliance. Moral principles such as faithfulness to treaty obligations, gratitude to France for her assistance during the Revolutionary War, and affinity to a fellow republic were advanced as arguments for American entry into the war on the French side. On April 22, 1793, Washington issued a proclamation of neutrality. Alexander Hamilton defended the proclamation very simply:

> "....Self-preservation is the first duty of a nation;"
> "It may be affirmed as a general principle, that the predominant motive of good offices from one nation to another, is the interest or advantage of the nation which performs them.
> Indeed, the rule of morality in this respect is not precisely the same between nations as between individuals. The duty of making its own welfare the guide of its actions, is much stronger upon the former than upon the latter; in proportion to the greater magnitude and importance of the national as compared with individual happiness, and to the greater permanency of the effects of national than of individual conduct. Existing millions, and for the most part future generations, are concerned in the present measures of a government; while the consequences of the private actions of an individual ordinarily terminate with himself, or are circumscribed within a narrow compass."
> "....our interference is not likely to alter the case; it would only serve prematurely to exhaust our strength."[59]

Hamilton clearly put the question of honoring this treaty obligation in concrete power terms. What were the risks and/or advantages of joining France against the rest of Europe? In this context the national interest was clearly not served by fulfilling the terms of the treaty, and moral principle was trampled under political reality.

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[59]Quoted in Morgenthau, H.J., "The Mainsprings of American Foreign Policy: The National Interest vs. Moral Abstractions", The American Political Science Quarterly, (December, 1950), p. 841-843

2. Idealists

The overt realism desribed above did not survive the turn of the century. Washington's Farewell Address is its final classic expression. Beginning with the administration of Thomas Jefferson, realistic power politics has been overlayed with ideals and moral principles. Political action became somewhat divorced from political thought and moral laws were used to justify political ends. Jefferson himself believed

> "We are firmly convinced, and we act on that conviction, that with nations, as with individuals, our interests soundly calculated, will ever be inseparable from our moral duties."[60]

Yet even in his policies as president

> "....the moral pretense yielded often, especially in private utterance, to the impact of the national interest upon native good sense."[61]

Nineteenth century American statemen, like Jefferson, saw national interests as moral principles; acting in terms of power, thinking in terms of morality. Manifest Destiny was seen as saving the Indians from themselves by "civilizing" them and converting them to Christianity, rather than as the unrelenting conquest it really was. Combined with the utter military inferiority of the Indians, which tended to obscure the traditional power elements of this policy, Manifest Destiny was a crusade with (ostensibly) few of the hallmarks of old-fashioned European power projection and colonization.

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[60]Jefferson, T., "Second Inaugural Address," March 4, 1805, in Peterson, M.D., ed., The Portable Thomas Jefferson, (Middlesex: Penguin, 1980)

[61]"The Mainsprings of American Foreign Policy"

3. Moralists

At the conclusion of the Spanish-American War a second major shift occurred in American leadership's thinking on the national interest. As the war ended, the status of the Philippine Islands was in question. President McKinley had no precedent in American history to guide him as to their disposition. During the previous century American national interest had centered on taming North America, establishing and maintaining the United States as the dominant power in the western hemisphere, and maintaining a balance of power among the European powers. McKinley's decision to annex the Philippines was unprecedented in that it was based on moral principles unrelated to national interests.[62] Moral principle is no longer used to justify policies in pursuit of the national interest; the former replaces the latter altogether.

This approach to the national interest is personified in Woodrow Wilson. Wilson's dedication to moral principle was so profound that he found the concept of national interest repugnant on moral grounds.

> "It is a very perilous thing to determine the foreign policy of a nation in the terms of material interest. It not only is unfair to those with whom you are dealing, but it is degrading as regards your own actions...We dare not turn from the principle that morality and not expediency is the thing that must guide us, and that we will never condone iniquity because it is most convenient to do so."[63]

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[62]McKinley decided it would be "the right thing to do." Wilson would develop a more elaborate moral/intellectual base.

[63]Wilson, W., Address given at Mobile, Alabama, October 27, 1913, quoted in "The Mainsprings of American Foreign Policy"

Wilson could not escape the national interest but his requirement for moral principles in foreign policy led to many problems during and after World War I. As previously stated, maintenance of a balance of power in Europe was a traditional American interest. As Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany threatened to successfully upset that balance it became imperative for the United States to join with the Allies in order to prevent that. Unable to see this for what it was (i.e. pursuit of a national interest), Wilson saw the danger Germany posed in moral terms. In his eyes, it was vital for the United States to enter the war to "make the world safe for democracy" and that this would be the "war to end all wars." Further he saw the traditional balance of power system in Europe as the root cause of the calamity. Thus, the purpose of victory in Europe was not the restore/create a viable balance among great powers, but rather to destroy the system of balances of power completely.[64]

Wilsonian moralism, when faced with hard-headed European statesmen pursuing their national interests, was doomed. Uncompromising moral principles are singularly out of place in international negotiations where compromise is a fundamental process. Morality grows in a cultural context, and when different cultures attempt to deal with each other on moral terms, cognitive dysfunctions are sure to result. In failing to consider the national interests of both former allies and enemies, the United States effectively abdicated her responsibilties and so lost an opportunity for establishing a safer and more stable Europe. Future historians will undoubtedly see World Wars I and II as one Great War.

Wilsonian moralism submerged during the isolationist period of the 1920's and 1930's, but as internationalism grew in the late 1930's, it did so in moralistic terms.

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[64]"The Mainsprings of American Foreign Policy", p. 849

Although American involvement in World War II was much greater than in World War I, the political results of the application of morality to international politics were depressingly familiar.

> "The practical results of this philosophy of international affairs, as applied to the political war and post-war problems, were, then, bound to be quite similar to those which had made the allied victory in the First World War politically meaningless. Conceived as it was as a 'crusade' -- to borrow from the title of General Eisenhower's book -- against the evil incarnate in the Axis Powers, the purpose of the Second World War could only be the destruction of that evil, transacted through the instrumentality of 'unconditional surrender.' Since the threat to the western world emanating from the Axis was conceived primarily in moral terms, it was easy to imagine that all conceivable danger was concentrated in that historic constellation of hostile powers and that with its destruction political evil itself would disappear from the world. Beyond 'unconditional surrender' there was, then, a brave new world after the model of Wilson's, which would liquidate the heritage of the defeated evil, not 'peace-loving' nations and would establish an order of thing where war, aggressiveness, and the struggle for power itself were to be no more. Thus Mr. Cordell Hull would declare on his return in 1943 from the Moscow Conference that the new international organization would mean the end of power politics and usher in a new era of international collaboration."[65]

World War II thus was fought, just as World War I had been, to do away with the balance of power. Only two shrewed statesmen realized the inefficacy of this approached and worked to establish a post-war balance favorable to their national interests. One, Stalin, succeeded; the other, Churchill, did not.

4. Relativism v. Absolutism

The categories of American statemen described above can also be seen as actors in a struggle between an absolute approach to defining national interests and a relativistic one. The Moralists can be termed political Absolutists; moral principle based on absolute truth facilitated develop-

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[65]Ibid., p. 852

ment of strategic vision but hampered its implementation as practical policy. The Realists and Idealists are more relativistic, though not exclusively. While possessing long range interests and some absolutes ("Life , Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness"), they are pragmatists when faced with real-world operational dilemmas. The American historical experience is predominately relativistic, particularly so in the past fifty years. In a democratic environment ad hoc decision making tends to become the rule, and the national interest changes as the political situation changes.

In totalitarian societies people are ordered to do the unpleasant but necessary duties associated with vital national interests. In democracies the term "Public Interest" is often used to motivate populations to do things they are reluctant to do and to justify unpopular policies. This use of the concept may be viewed cynically:

> "There is perhaps no better example on all language of the utility of myth than the phrase 'the public interest.' It is the balm of the official conscience. It is oil on the troubled waters of public discontent. It is one of society's most effective analgesics. But to have this phrase serve this purpose over time, public servants must be able to give it a rational content anchored in widely shared value assumptions. The more that a society is built upon consent rather than upon threat and constraint the more this is true. Happily for policy makers, the public os often quite easily satisfied. I have watched fence-mending congressmen explain with astounding success an unpopular vote simply by leading untutored constituents down a garden path rich with flowers marked 'fair,' 'just,' 'decent,' 'good,' 'brave,' 'clean,' 'reverent.' The most discouraging aspect of totalitarianism is not the power lust of its leaders, but the ease with which people adjust to losses in political freedom when that loss is explained in terms of public necessity."[66]

or philosophically:

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[66]Bailey, S.K., "The Public Interest: Some Operational Dilemmas," contained in Friedrich, C.J., ed., The Public Interest, (New York: Atherton, 1962), p. 97

"These natural and necessary duties have to do with the defense and advancement abroad of the vital interests of the state and with its order, security, and solvency at home. Invariably these duties call for hard decisions. They are hard because the governors of the state must tax, conscript, command, prohibit; they must assert a public interest against private inclination and against what is easy and popular. If they are to do their duty, they must often swim against the tides of private feeling."[67]

5. National Interest as Process

In their attempts to define national interests some scholars have limited themselves to simple, easily perceived symptoms of national health such as defense of the homeland, economic well-being, favorable world order, and promotion of national ideology.[68] This approach is emotionally satisfying but epistemologically void. It is of little help in operationally defining the national interest.

A more effective method is to investigate the public/national interest as a process of legitimization. Professor Frank Teti described this process as involving the cybernetic linkage of three sets of variables:[69]

1. The Cultural Context, composed of the epistemological procedures and assumptions which comprise cultural identity. Over time those assumptions become institutionalized, providing the defining characteristics of a given polity.
2. The Problematic Situation, which is simply the situation in which the leadership finds itself, and the problems it is attempting to solve. The problematic situation can often be so overwhelmingly complex and

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[67]The Public Philosophy, p. 15

[68]Nuechterlein, D.E., National Interests and Presidential Leadership: The Setting of Priorities, (Boulder: Westview, 1978)

[69]Teti, F.M., "The Public Interest: In Search of an Operational Definition", (Monterey, 1983).

immediately dangerous that ad hoc methods seem to be the only viable means of coping, a dangerous procedure.

> "Conceptions of the national or public interest must refer to a given context and, to this extent, the national interest is a product of contextualism....If one judges the veracity of political acts solely in terms of the problematic situation, excluding from consideration the cultural context, one would be subscribing to ad hoc methods which would be unable either to achieve legitimation in the immediate or provide continuity for the future."[70]

3. The Decision Process, several aspects of which were described in chapter 2. The decision process of a nation tends to reflect its political and cultural philosophy. In the United States philosophical commitment to a high level of political and cultural pluralism is reflected in the long, drawn-out decision making processes which characterize the national government, the federal budget being an excellent example.

This approach to defining the national interest, while not providing explicit statements of American national interest, has the merit of universal application. Its components change constantly, making scientific equations of national interest difficult. But precisely for this reason it allows construction of models which better reflect the real world and are more operationally viable than simple statements such as Nuechterlein's. By approaching the national interest conceptually, operationalization may be realized. Particularly as the cultural context changes, the national interest itself will be altered. Clearly the rapidly changing demographic complexion of the United States will modify the cultural context and alter American national

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[70]Ibid., p. 20

interests. A thorough understanding of this process by strategic planners and policymakers may make that inevitable evolution of societal values a healthy process for this nation.

B. TYPES OF NATIONAL INTERESTS AND THEIR USES

Even if the concept of the national interest defies static operational definition, its existence as an influence upon/tool of policymakers is beyond dispute. Delineating some basic types of interests may throw some additional light on the meaning of the term.

There are three broad categories of interests which may be involved in a given problematic situation.[71]

1. Self-Regarding Interests -- refers to basic issues of national survival and prestige. George and Keohane further refine self-regarding interests through the use of irreducible national interests containing "basic" and "secondary" self-regarding interests. These basic self-regarding interests are defined as:
   a) Physical Survival -- referring to survival of the nation's population
   b) Liberty -- referring to the freedom of a people to choose their own form of government.
   c) Economic Subsistence -- some minimum level of general welfare which is essential to the legitimacy of all modern governments, as well as being an important element of national power.
2. Other-Regarding Interests, referring to benefits accruing to other nations as the result of one's own national policy.

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[71]George, A.L., and Keohane, R.O., "The Concept of National Interests: Uses and Limitations," in George, A.L., Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy: The Effective Use of Information and Advice, (Boulder: Westview, 1980)

3. Collective Interests, when benefits are clearly visible but cannot be distinguished as exclusively belonging to one nation. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an example of collective interests being served, where western European countries mutually benefit not only from the military security arrangement but also from an ordered economic system allowing substantially free trade.

While irreducible self-regarding interests are seemingly uncompetitive in their impact on policymakers, in fact they have often introduced a dilemma into American foreign policy as illustrated below.

Since World War II there has existed among American Presidents and their policy advisors a concensus concerning the two primary threats to American irreducible national interests. These are the spread of international communism and the possibility of thermonuclear war. One objective has been to counter both these dangers; but firm pressure on one often increases the probability of the other. For example, to have aided the British and French during the Suez Crisis of 1956 would have almost certainly unseated Nasser and given Soviet influence in Egypt a severe setback,[72] but would have drastically increased the threat of World War III. Likewise, by steadfastly avoiding possibilities of war, such as accepting a blatant communist coup in Grenada (with its strategic position on shipping lanes vital to American foreign trade) without decisive response, would facilitate the spread of communism.

Self-regarding interests obviously will tend to dominate planning and policymaking, particularly in a time of crisis. Alliances are nice, but in an anarchical international setting, leaders must look first to their own national

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[72]Neustadt, R.E., Alliance Politics, (New York: Columbia, 1970), p. 8-29

survival. The intensity of the problematic situation imbues levels of intensity upon perceptions of national interests.

C. INTENSITIES

Assessing the intensity of the national interest involved in the problematic situation is a vital step in planning a nation's course of action.

> "For example, a government may be deeply concerned about a coup d'etat in a friendly country, but the intensity of its concern will depend on several factors, such as distance from its own borders, composition of its government, the amount of trade and investment that exists there, and historical relationships. Policymakers must also look at the potential costs of attempting to counter an unfavorable event or trend in another country -- for example, the effectiveness of various policy options in changing the course of events, and risks of war. Thus, the degree of interest the United States, or any major power, has in a specific international issue results from thinking through the values and costs perceived to be involved in coping with the issue."[73]

Professor Nuechterlein outlines four valuable levels of intensity:

1. Survival Issues -- The continued existence of the state is at stake. Military attack on national territory, or the prospect of imminent attack, is clearly a survival issue. Of the types of interests discussed above, only the irreducible self-regarding interest of physical survival qualifies for this intensity. The immediate threat of massive harm is present.
2. Vital Issues -- Strong measures, including employment of military forces, may be necessary to deal with the problematic situation. A vital issue may have the capacity to be equally injurious to a nation as a survival issue, but its effect is over a longer term. The prospect of a communist controlled Grenada

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[73]National Interests and Presidential Leadership, p. 8

perched on important American sea lines of communication was deemed to threaten vital United States' interests and decisive action was taken to correct the problem. The prospect of another hostage crisis a la 1980 also lent vital intensity to the Grenada situation.

3. Major Issues -- major issues are characterized by adverse trends in the international environment which require positive action before they escalate to vital or survival issues. Major issues are almost invariable resolved through negotiation and normal avenues of diplomatic intercourse; if the issue cannot be resolve through these means, either or both countries involved will re-assess their interest in the issue. If important enough, the issue become vital. If either actor decides that the matter in question is not worth the risks involved in settling vital issues, the case is probably a peripheral issue.
4. Peripheral Issues -- the well-being of the state is not involved in the issue at hand, but special groups within the state have interests at stake. Drastic action by the national government is not called for and will not be forthcoming in a peripheral issue.

The utility to the planner of these intensity levels lies in the framework they provide for anticipating the actions of other nations when their interests are threatened by American actions. This does not imply the avoidance of conflict, but if a United States policy can be seen as encroaching upon a vital interest of another state, it will not be surprised by the hostile reaction which results. If the United States' advance into North Korea during the Korean war had been seen as threatening a vital Chinese interest, American leaders would not have been caught unawares when the Chinese crossed the border in large

numbers. Consideration of the current and potential adversaries' interests in such a situation should be a component of prudent strategic planning.

VI. CONCLUSION

A. THE ENVIRONMENT

For the past one and one-half centuries political observers have questioned whether the American political system, with its institutional fragmentation, is capable of meeting the demands of international relations. For most of this period it has been adequate. Events developed much more slowly and the United States either too weak to be a serious force in international politics (up until World War I) or too disinterested (the inter-war years). Only since World War II, when America assumed the inevitable role of world leadership, has the structure and procedure of government been seriously called into question. The question is still being asked: Can the United States, given its fragmented governmental structure and the impatient character of its people, survive sustained international conflict short of total war?

The prevailing opinion seems to be that it cannot, at least not in its original Madisonian structure. Some modification to the model has been necessary. Thus since 1945 Presidents have acquired greater and greater power, reaching a peak during the Vietnam War. The structure of the government was not fundamentally altered, but the relative importance of the actors changed. Hamiltonian centralization of power was assumed to be the cure for excessive Madisonian fragmentation. In the nation at large, the federal government has dominated the States to an extent which would have horrified Madison; within the federal government, the President has generally assumed dominance over the Congress.

It is important to recall that foreign policy concerns led to the "Imperial Presidency." The demands of modern international relations are too great for a government structured along the Madisonian divisions of authority. This is not a criticism of Madison. He conceived this government in a time of intense domestic crisis, as the failure of the Articles of Confederation threatened to reduce the fledgling United States of America to anarchy. His model is intended to ensure domestic order and personal freedom based on balances of power within the government. It has proven remarkably flexible and contains built-in evolutionary mechanisms. But it was never designed for the global leadership role which the United States plays today. The age of nuclear weapons and instantaneous mass-communication has strained it perhaps to the breaking point.

The Madisonian model still has a lot of life in it. It does impose many constraints which work against coherence and continuity in foreign policy. But the constraints are knowable. This thesis has briefly examined the constitutional stucture and the processes of compromise and consensus attendant to it, the impact of mass media and public opinion on foreign policy, the defense budget, and the interests and influence of the President. When these factors are ignored by planners and policymakers, failure is the certain result.

Systemic change is unlikely. The impatient nature of the American people, fueled by its press, is even more resistant to change. Thirty minutes of nightly news, daily public opinion polls, etc. rob time for reflection. The media requirement for daily triumphs and daily failures (perceived or real) exacerbates that natural American impatience. Tenacity and perseverance, vital to coherent policy, are its victims.

B. THE MILITARY PLANNER

One of the most prominent features of the military establishment in Washington, apart from its sheer size, is its extraordinary weakness. A full discussion of this weakness is not within the scope of the thesis, but part of it lies the credibility gap between military planners and their political overlords. Military participation in the national security planning process must be more than merely the construction of worst case scenarios. Military planners have a responsibility to themselves and their superiors to tell them when the political objective can not be achieved by military means or where military force will have only marginal utility while incurring great costs. They have an equal responsibility to realistically plan for achievement of political objectives. An elaborate command structure such as the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF), now known as the Central Command (CENTCOM), is a hoax played on the American people and the American military. Structured around a threat of the greatest magnitude, namely a full-scale Soviet invasion of Iran designed to threaten or seize the Persian Gulf oil fields, CENTCOM has no forces assigned. All planning has been done on the assumption that CENTCOM forces will be drawn from other, already committed forces.

The problems with this planning are obvious. A Soviet invasion of southwest Asia is not going to be an isolated event. It is difficult to imagine a more grave crisis. The likelihood of forces committed to European and Asian theaters being transferred to CENTCOM is extremely low in a time of such tension.

The forces do not exist for CENTCOM. The political reality is that only the contingency for which they are intended (Soviet invasion of Iran) could stimulate the

political will necessary to create the requisite forces. By the time they could be inducted, trained, and deployed, the war would be over. Even if the United States had the forces today, it lacks the air- and sealift capacity to get them in theater. The work of many dedicated planners thus goes for nothing.

Most of the constraints discussed in this thesis are out of military control. The defense budget is not. The budget is the one area under discussion in this thesis which could come under much stronger military influence. The budget, through PPBS, has assumed a life of its own. Instead of being a vital implement of national defense planning, it is merely the aggregate of program managers' inputs. Programming has completely dominated Planning. The military has contracted its leadership out to civilian systems' analysts. The Planning aspects of PPBS must be brought into prominence. The system must be made to serve national goals, not the goals of bureaucratic underlings.

Military power exists to secure the political objective. This concept is alien to American ideology, but it is true nevertheless. The CENTCOM example above is abhorrent to the military professional. A political object has been assigned, but the political will to achieve it is lacking. This is the same dysfunction of ends and means which led to compromise in Korea and defeat in Vietnam.

The United States is not well served by a military establishment which continues to say "can do" to all orders, no matter how preposterous. Military strategic planners must not throw away their talents. They have an obligation to the nation to better understand the environment in which plans are translated into policies which become force structures. Strategic planning in the Pentagon is in vain if its products have no hope of implementation in the American political system.

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